



Vancouver's Homelessness Response (2021-Present)

Jamie Spinelli
Homeless Response Manager-City Manager's Office
January 26, 2026



The Broader System

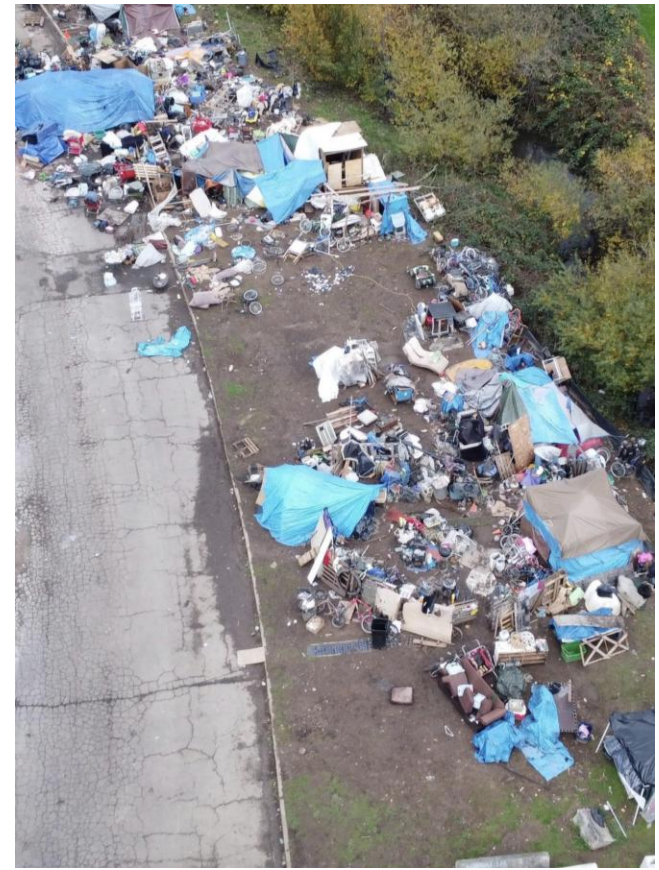
- This work did not start with the City
- Longstanding partners have provided critical services
- **Shared goal:** people safely housed with appropriate supports
- City role is distinct, not duplicative



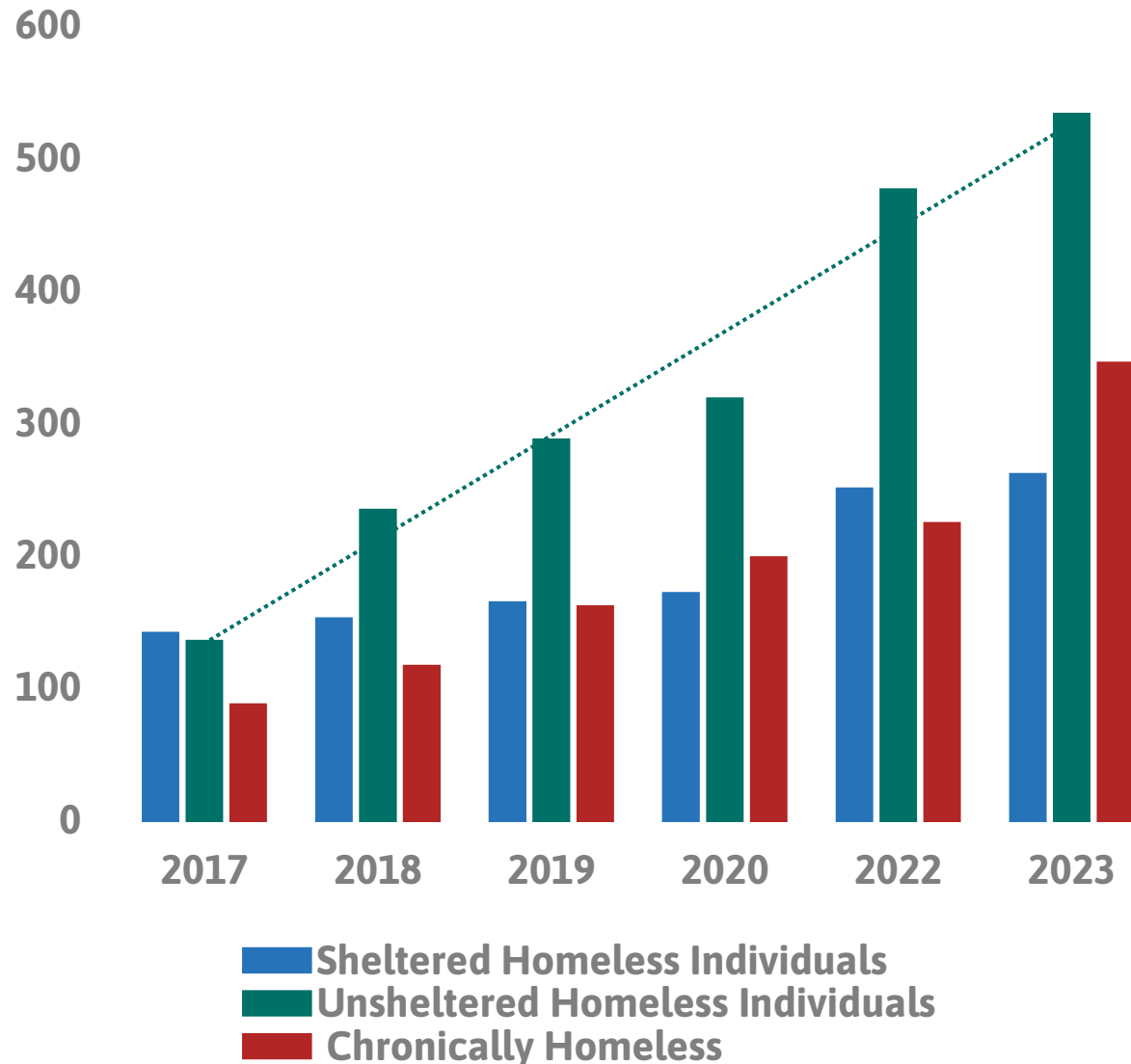
Why Vancouver's Response Changed

Impacts of unsheltered homelessness

- Community health
- Public safety
- Infrastructure & environment
- Neighborhoods & businesses



Point-in Time Counts 2017-2023



Post-COVID Conditions

- Unsheltered homelessness increased
- Emergency service demand increased
- Preventable deaths increased



Emergency Declaration

The emergency does:

- Enable faster action and urgency
- Help expand temporary capacity
- Increase coordination and some flexibility

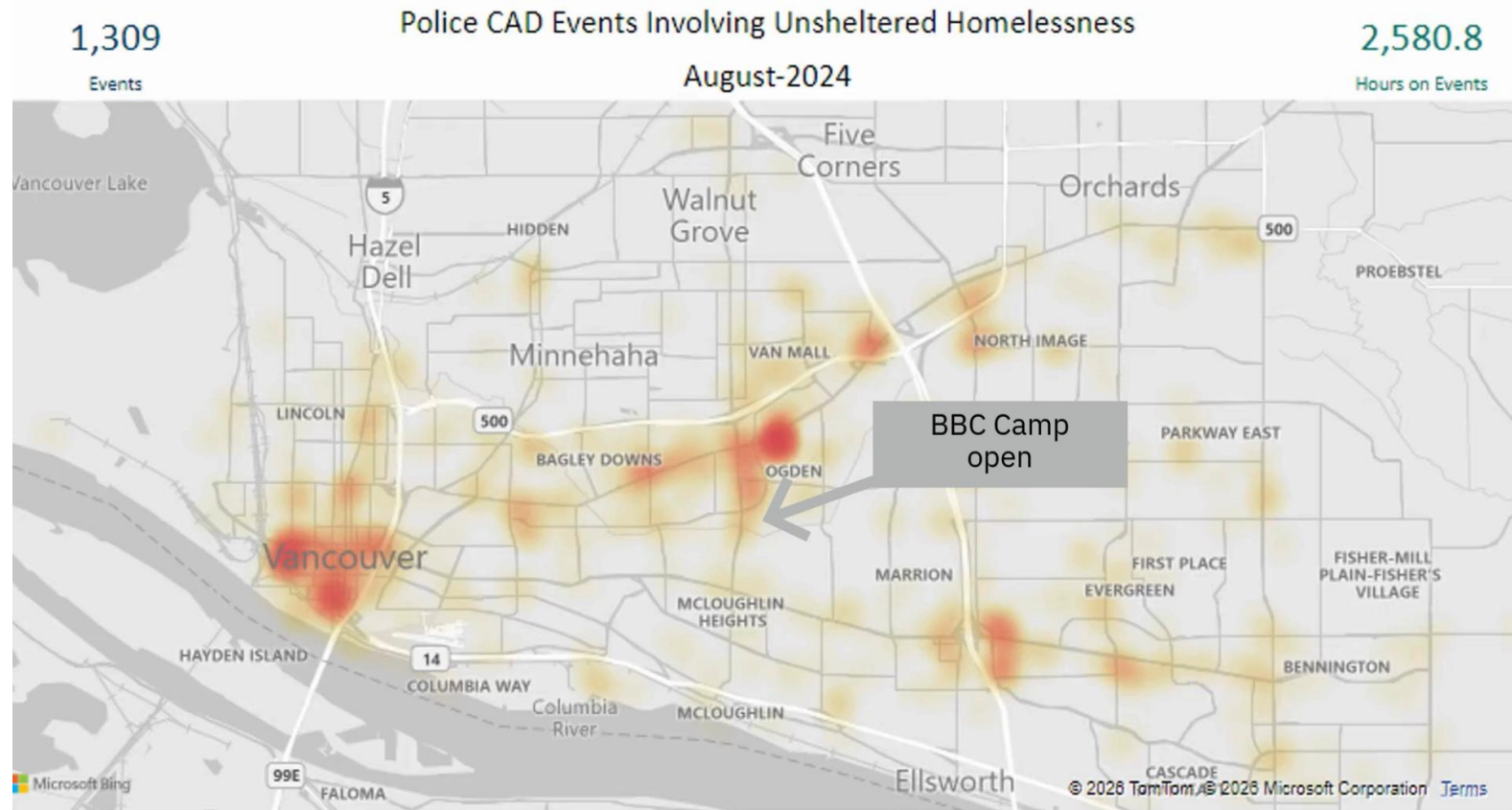
The emergency does not:

- Solve homelessness
- Replace long-term systems



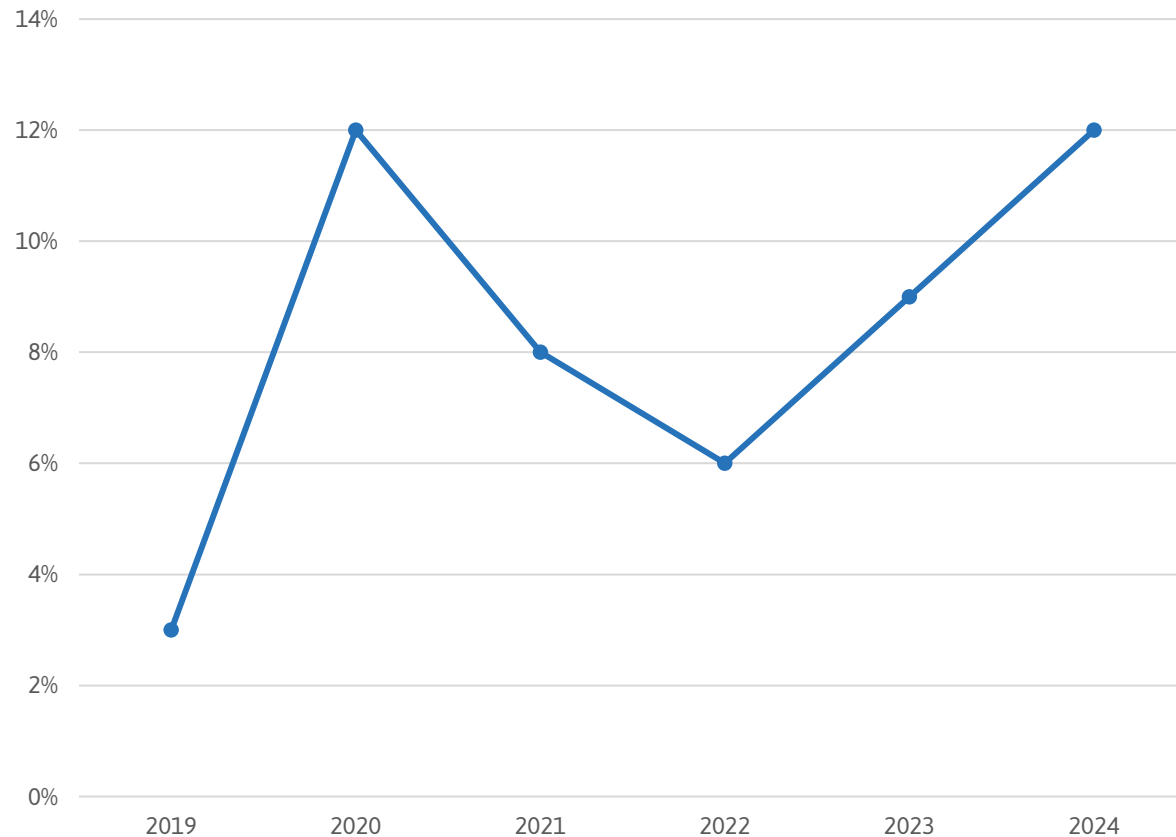
Community Impact Over Time

- Encampments are dynamic, not static
- Impacts shift across the city
- Visibility changes do not necessarily mean growth



Unmanaged Movement Leads to Harm

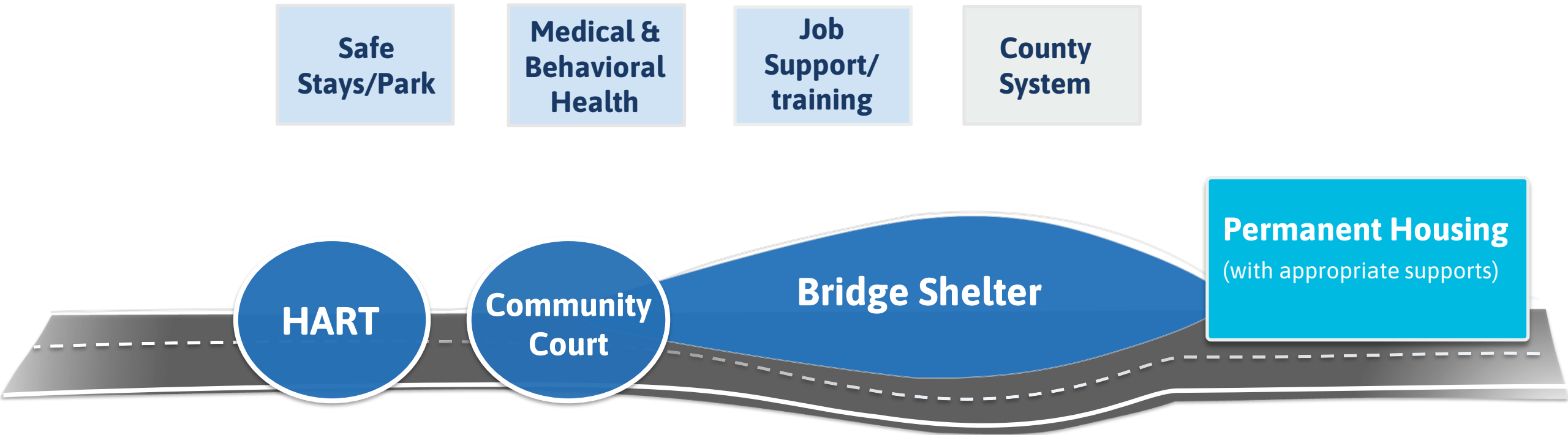
Persons Experiencing Homelessness as % of all Clark County Overdose Deaths



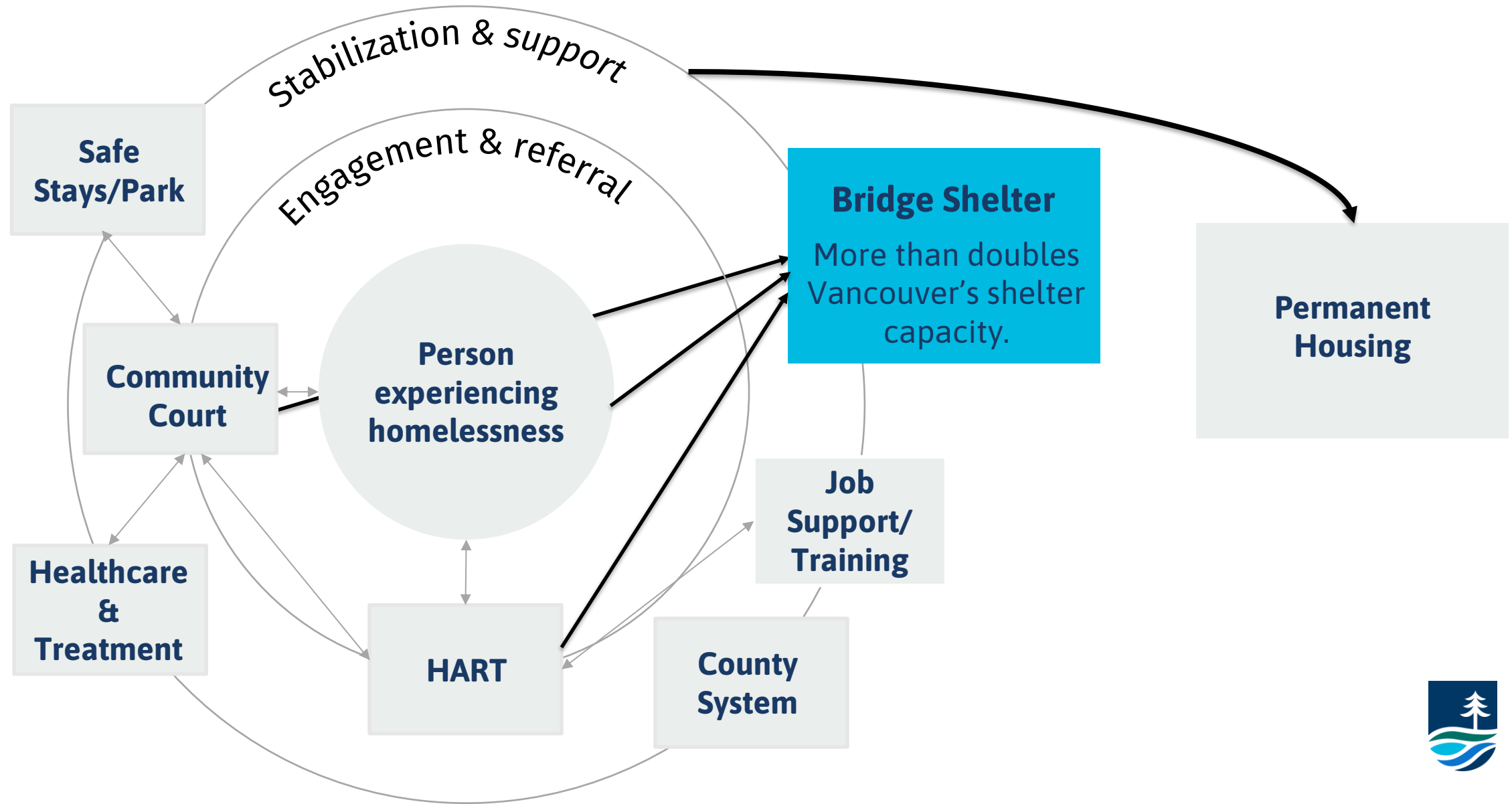
- Displacement without options increases risk and instability
- Impacts spread rather than resolve
- Emergency services are strained



The System We've Built




How the System Works




HART: The Front Door

- Primary engagement with unsheltered individuals in city
- Connection point to all other City options, Coordinated Entry, and other systems
- Coordinates encampment assessments, notices, and cleanups

2024 → 2025 Encampment Response

352 tons solid waste removed  **15%**

329 unique individuals
engaged and cited into
Community Court  **108%**

**456 individuals found to be
unsheltered** (375 surveyed)  **6%**

2 large encampments decommissioned in
2025

Stabilization: Safe Stays & Safe Park

Positive exit rate from Safe Stay Communities more than double national average

- Provide safety and stability
- Build community
- Create connections to services and housing



2025 Snapshot

466 served

35% positive exits
across sites





Participant Experience

Internship Project: Measuring Success of Safe Stays & Safe Park

- 16 participant interviews
- 2-part definition of “success”
 - Housing outcomes
 - Participant-defined, based on progress and goals
- **88% reported progress toward goals and stability**



Community Court

- Accountability paired with opportunity
- Structured pathway to engagement and services
- Meaningful outcomes for participants

15% of participants who utilized Community Court and Safe Stay obtained housing.



2025: By the Numbers

329 people cited in
To date: 558

85 opted-in
To date: 184

104 graduations
To date: 178

570 hours community
service hours
completed
To date: 1140.5 hours

4 participants
obtained housing
To date: 35

Following People Through the System

For the first time, the City can see the full path for most people we serve.

- At least 163 unsheltered individuals engaged by HART have *never* used City or County shelter
- 44 people cited have *never* engaged with countywide homeless response system
 - 2023: 1
 - 2024: 12
 - 2025: 30
- At least **183 unique individuals** have engaged with *every component* of City system
 - 28 obtained housing
 - 44 used Safe Stay/Safe Park program(s) more than once
 - 7 obtained housing



Looking Forward

What's Next

- Bridge shelter (Fall 2026)
- Continued/expanded coordination
- Improve data collection
- Ongoing adaptation



What's Still Needed

- Enhanced supports in shelter and housing
- Behavioral health service capacity
- Workforce capacity
- Increased affordability and housing supply